

Secondary Homelessness: A Sense of Lost Belonging

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Introduction: Secondary homelessness is characterised by frequent relocation. This is caused by various reasons resulting in an ominous cycle of relocation. A lifestyle of loss of emotional attachment is generated, therefore strengthening the pursuit of a new place to call home. Belonging encompasses the connectedness to extrinsic factors. The manifestation of this cycle indicates a probable meagre sense of connectedness - a sense of lost belonging.

Objective: As part of a larger study, this paper aims to explore the degree of belonging through observing occupational engagement amongst identified households experiencing secondary homelessness in a South African context.

Methodology: Purposive sampling was conducted with a prominent member in the community to select eight contributors. Semi-structured interviews and photo voice were the methods implemented for data collection. Data analysis generated the opportunity for the contributors' voices to be accentuated through the use of open-coding in inductive reasoning.

Results: Instability was a reoccurring concept that arose during the data analysis. From this lack of stability, three aspects pertaining to belonging were deduced: diminished connectedness, compensatory connectedness and a longing for connectedness.

Conclusion: Occupational engagement refers to the connectedness during participation in occupations - portraying the degree of belonging and facilitating the experience of belonging. Occupational Therapists can therefore utilise occupational engagement to regain the sense of connectedness - belonging. This exploration of belonging allows for a potential partnership to be formed between persons experiencing homelessness and the Occupational Therapist.